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To: [Wellman, Lois A](#); [Frazer, Gary D](#); [Arroyo, Bryan](#); [Dove, William](#); [Skipwith, Aurelia](#); [Wallace, George R](#); [Tanner, John R](#); [Mills, Katie E](#); [Prandoni, Christopher D](#); [Hall, Amanda L](#); [Budd-Falen, Karen J](#); [Romanik, Peg A](#); [Jesup, Benjamin C](#); [Chen, Linus Y](#); [Goldfarb, Joan R](#); [Gallagher, Sean P](#); [Patnaik, Bivan R](#); [Snyder, Caitlin](#); [Shire, Gavin G](#)
Cc: [Sellars, Roslyn](#); [Cooke, Maureen P](#); [Robbins, Tasha L](#); [Caminiti, Mariagrazia](#)
Subject: April 6 Weekly ES Tracking Materials
Date: Thursday, April 2, 2020 7:28:10 AM
Attachments: [ESA Tracking Spreadsheet 04022020.pdf](#)
[Florida Bonneted Bat PCH IM 04022020.pdf](#)

Please see the attached materials for the weekly tracking meeting on Monday April 6th.

Bridget Fahey
Division Chief for Conservation and Classification
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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Weekly Update
ES Action Tracking
April 6, 2020

Species	Action Type	DOI Unified Region	To Director	To ASFWP	To Exec Sec	To FR	Notes
Urgent: Court Deadlines Due This Week							
None.							
Urgent: Court Deadlines In Next 2 Weeks							
Narrow-headed and northern Mexican garter snakes (FR00003951)	Revised Proposed Critical Habitat	8	(3/29/2020)	3/29/2020	3/30/2020	4/13/2020	With FWP. SA to deliver to FR by 4/13/20.
Attention: Upcoming Court Deadlines							
Pacific fisher (FR00003955)	Final listing	10	3/26/2020	4/3/2020	4/10/2020	4/24/2020	With Director. Court order to deliver to FR by 4/25/20.
Florida bonneted bat (FR00003974)	Proposed Critical Habitat	2	4/1/2020	4/18/2020	5/1/2020	5/15/2020	With Director. SA to deliver to FR or OIRA by 5/15/20.
Elfin woods warbler	Final Critical Habitat	2	4/20/2020	5/4/2020	5/18/2020	6/1/2020	With the Region. SA to deliver to FR by 6/1/20.
Big Cypress epidendrum and Cape Sable orchid	12-month finding	2	5/18/2020	6/2/2020	6/16/2020	6/30/2020	With the Region. SA to deliver to FR by 6/30/20.
Elk River crayfish (FR00003967)	12-month finding	1	5/18/2020	6/2/2020	6/16/2020	6/30/2020	With DCC-BDL. SA to deliver to FR by 6/30/20.
longsolid, purple lilliput, and round hickorynut (FR00003954)	12-month finding and proposed listing and critical habitat	2	5/18/2020	6/2/2020	6/16/2020	6/30/2020	With the Region. SA to deliver to FR by 6/30/20.
slickspot peppergrass (FR00003962)	Revised Proposed Critical Habitat	9	5/18/2020	6/2/2020	6/16/2020	6/30/2020	With AES-DCC. SA to deliver to FR by 6/30/20.
dunes sagebrush lizard (FR00003670)	90-day finding	6	5/18/2020	6/2/2020	6/16/2020	6/30/2020	With DCC-BDL. SA to deliver to FR by 6/30/20.
Arctic grayling (FR00003967)	12-month finding	5	5/19/2020	6/3/2020	6/17/2020	7/1/2020	With DCC-BDL. SA to deliver to FR by 7/1/20.

Weekly Update
ES Action Tracking

Species	Action Type	DOI Unified Region	To Director	To ASFWP	To Exec Sec	To FR	Notes
Attention: Non-Court Driven Actions							
Texas hornshell (FR00003363)	Proposed Critical Habitat	6	(7/16/2019)	7/22/2019	8/5/2019	8/19/2019	With FWP. <i>Complaint received.</i>
Yangtze Sturgeon (FR00003523)	Final Listing	HQ	8/14/2019	9/2/2019	9/16/2019	9/30/2019	With Director.
Peppered chub (FR00003625)	Proposed Listing and Critical Habitat	6	9/24/2019	10/16/2019	10/30/2019	11/13/2019	With Director. <i>Complaint received .</i>
Candy darter (FR00003688)	Final Critical Habitat	1	(2/18/2020)	2/18/2020	11/21/2019	12/5/2019	With FWP. <i>Complaint received .</i>
Leatherback sea turtle (FR00003732)	12-month finding	HQ	11/1/2019	11/19/2019	12/3/2019	12/17/2019	With Director.
Island marble butterfly (FR00003820)	Final Listing and Critical Habitat	9	(11/7/2019)	(1/30/2020)	2/6/2020	12/20/2019	With Exec Sec. <i>Complaint received.</i>
Cumberland sandwort (FR00003857)	Proposed Delisting	4	(1/2/2020)	(1/19/2020)	1/24/2020	1/27/2020	With Exec Sec.
Sonoyta mud turtle (FR00003864)	Final Critical Habitat	7	(3/23/2020)	3/23/2020	2/11/2020	2/25/2020	With FWP.
Atlantic pigtoe (FR00003876)	Reopening of the Comment Period on the Proposed Listing, 4(d), and Critical Habitat	2	(3/2/2020)	3/2/2020	2/26/2020	3/11/2020	With FWP. <i>Complaint received.</i>
Borax Lake chub (FR00003917)	Final Delisting	9	(3/29/2020)	3/30/2020	4/26/2020	5/10/2020	With FWP

Weekly Update
ES Action Tracking

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Neuse River waterdog and Carolina madtom (FR00003942)	Reopening of the Comment Period on the Proposed Listing, 4(d), and Critical Habitat	2	3/6/2020	3/27/2020	4/10/2020	4/24/2020	With AES-DCC to address Director comments.
Missouri DPS of the eastern hellbender (FR00003862)	Final Listing	3	3/6/2020	4/2/2020	4/16/2020	4/30/2020	With AES-DCC to address Director comments.
San Benito Evening Primrose (FR00003666)	Proposed Delisting	10	3/23/2020	4/6/2020	4/20/2020	5/4/2020	With Director.

Packages w FWS to address SPR ruling

Chapin Mesa milkvetch (FR00003313)	Proposed Listing and Critical Habitat	7	(12/8/2019)	(1/30/2020)	9/16/2019	9/30/2019	Cleared FWP and sent to Director for signature. With AES to address Director comments. Affected by SPR ruling. <i>NOI received</i> .
Eastern black rail (FR00003761)	Final Listing and 4(d)	2	(1/7/2020)	(1/13/2020)	2/7/2020	10/28/2019	Affected by SPR ruling. Complaint received.
Morro Shoulderband Snail (FR00003784)	Proposed Downlisting	10	(12/9/2019)	(1/30/2020)	2/6/2020	11/8/2019	Affected by SPR ruling. With Exec Sec.
Wright's marsh thistle (FR00003756)	Proposed Listing and Critical Habitat	6	(1/7/2020)	1/7/2020	11/4/2019	11/18/2019	With AES to address FWP comments. Affected by SPR ruling. <i>NOI received</i> .
Big Creek crayfish, St. Francis River crayfish (FR00003630)	Proposed Listing and Critical Habitat	3	10/16/2019	11/5/2019	11/19/2019	12/3/2019	With AES to address Director comments. Affected by SPR ruling.
Whitebark pine (FR00003801)	Proposed Listing and 4(d)	6	11/21/2019	12/11/2019	12/26/2019	1/10/2020	With AES to address Director comments. Affected by SPR ruling. <i>NOI received</i> .

Weekly Update
ES Action Tracking

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Slenderclaw crayfish (FR00003888)	Final Listing, 4(d), and Critical Habitat	2	1/9/2020	1/30/2020	2/13/2020	2/27/2020	With AES to address Director comments. Affected by SPR ruling. <i>Complaint received</i> .
Beach layia (FR00003889)	Proposed Downlisting	10	1/13/2020	1/27/2020	2/10/2020	2/24/2020	With AES to address Director comments. Affected by SPR ruling.

Dates in **BOLD** are actual dates; in parentheses are surname dates

Completed!!!

Golden conure (FR00003570)	Final Downlisting	HQ	(10/26/2019)	(1/19/2020)	1/24/2020		Cleared 4/2/2020
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Outstanding Notices of Intent to Sue & Complaints on ESA S4 Deadlines

Date	Species	Action Noticed / Allegation	Sender/Plaintiff
Notices of Intent to Sue			
3/10/2020	Culebra skink, Mona skink, lesser Virgin Islands skink, Virgin Islands skink, Puerto Rican skink, Greater St. Croix skink, Greater Virgin Islands skink, lesser St. Croix skink	12M	Born Free USA, CBD, HSI, HSUS, NRDC
3/3/2020	Penasco least chipmunk, gopher tortoise, longfin smelt, Colorado delta clam, Texas pimpleback, Texas fawnsfoot, Texas fatmucket, magnificent ramshorn, rattlesnake-master borer moth, Wright's marsh thistle, Chapin mesa milkvetch, skiff milkvetch, bracted twistflower, whitebark pine	PL	CBD
1/31/2020	northern spotted owl	12M uplist/tax change; 5-year review	Environmental Protection Information Center, Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, Western Environmental Law Center, American Bird Conservancy, Cascadia Wildlands, Oregon Wild, Pilchuck Audubon Society, Northcoast Environmental Center, Safe Alternatives for our Forest Environment, Forest Issues Group, Lassen Forest Preservation Group, Sierra Foothills Audubon Society, and South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership
12/4/2019	Rio Grande chub, Rio Grande sucker, sturgeon chub, narrow-footed hygrotus diving beetle	12m	WEG
10/31/2019	coastal marten	FL	CBD, Environmental Protection Information Center
8/26/2019	23 Micronesian species	missed deadlines to designate CH	CBD
5/2/2017	relict dace	12M	Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics
11/16/2016	African elephant	12M uplist/tax change	CBD, et al.

Date	Species	Action Noticed / Allegation	Sender/Plaintiff
12/28/2015	39 foreign species (sturgeon, tarantulas, bats, Ridgway's hawk, Flores hawk-eagle)	12M	Friends of Animals
12/10/2015	pygmy 3-toed sloth	12M	Animal Welfare Institute
12/10/2014	Florida pine snake, Key ringneck snake, rim rocked crowned snake, short tailed snake, southern hognosed snake, Cedar Key mole skink, Carolina gopher frog, Florida scrub lizard	12M	CBD
10/7/2014	western pond turtle, southern rubber boa, western spadefoot, Inyo Mountains salamander, lesser slender salamander, relictual slender salamander, Kern Plateau salamander, Kern Canyon slender salamander, limestone salamander, Shasta salamander, Panamint alligator lizard	12M	CBD
10/7/2014	flat tailed tortoise, spider tortoise	12M	Friends of Animals
7/10/2014	rayed bean	CH	CESAR
1/16/2014	Rio Grande cooter, AZ toad, Yuman desert fringe toed lizard, Cascades cavern salamander	12M	CBD
3/14/2013	piebald madtom, saddled madtom, Coosa creekshell, Coosawattae crayfish, North FL spider cave crayfish	12M	CBD
1/29/2013	Eastern diamondback rattlesnake	12M	CBD
6/18/2012	GA blind salamander, Palatka skipper, Orlando cave crayfish, purple skimmer, white meadowbeauty, FL cave amphipod	12M	CBD

Complaints

3/19/2020	eastern black rail	FL	CBD, Healthy Gulf
3/18/2020	wolverine	FL	CBD, Conservation Northwest, Defenders, Friends of the Clearwater, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Idaho Conservation League, Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, and Rocky Mountain Wild
2/27/2020	241 species	12m, CH, FL	CBD
2/20/2020	lake sturgeon	12m	CBD, Fishable Indiana Streams for Hoosiers, Hoosier Environmental Council, Prairie Rivers Network
1/22/2020	7 pangolin species: Chinese, giant ground, Indian, long-tailed (black-bellied), Philippine, Sunda, and tree (white-bellied)	12m	Born Free USA, CBD, HSI, HSUS, NRDC
1/21/2020	Pascagoula and Pearl River map turtles	12m	CBD, Healthy Gulf
1/8/2020	Green Sea Turtle DPS	CH	CBD, Turtle Island Restoration Network, Sea Turtle Oversight Protection

Date	Species	Action Noticed / Allegation	Sender/Plaintiff
10/1/2019	dunes sagebrush lizard	90d	CBD, Defenders
7/12/2019	Arizona eryngo	12M	CBD, Maricopa Audubon Society
Resolved			
3/20/2020	golden conure	FL	American Federation of Aviculture

Information Memorandum for the Secretary/Director

Date: March 30, 2020
From: Gary Frazer, Assistant Director, Ecological Services
Telephone #: 202-208-4646
Subject: Proposed Rule to Designate Critical Habitat for the Florida Bonneted Bat

I. Introduction

The Florida bonneted bat (*Eumops floridanus*) is a large, non-migratory, free-tailed bat, endemic to south Florida. We listed the species as endangered on October 2, 2013 (78 FR 61003). At that time, we concluded that critical habitat (CH) was prudent but not determinable due to lack of information on the physical and biological features essential for the species' conservation. Since that time, more research has helped us define the physical and biological features, and we have drafted a proposed designation using scientifically sound and defensible approaches. Under a court-ordered settlement agreement with the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), we must send the proposed designation to the Federal Register by May 15, 2020. We are proposing to designate approximately 598,259 hectares (ha) (1,478,333 acres (ac)) in portions of 10 Florida counties as CH for the Florida bonneted bat.

II. Background

Previous Federal Actions

The Florida bonneted bat was first recognized as a candidate (category 2) for possible future listing on September 18, 1985 (50 CFR 37958), as the Florida mastiff bat (*Eumops glaucinus floridanus*). In 1991 (56 FR 58804), this bat was upgraded to a category 1 candidate; however, it was removed from the candidate list in 1996 (61 FR 7596), as the taxon was deemed more abundant or widespread than previously believed or not subject to any identifiable threat. In 2009, the Florida bonneted bat was recognized as a candidate species (i.e., listing was warranted but precluded by other higher priority listing actions) with a Listing Priority Number (LPN) of 2 (Candidate Notice of Review (74 FR 57804)), indicating that it is a high priority for the Service to determine appropriate action for this taxon.

In 2010, we received a petition from Wild South to list the bat. In 2011, the Service initiated a multi-year listing work plan as part of a settlement agreement with WildEarth Guardians and CBD. As part of the work plan, we proposed to list the Florida bonneted bat as endangered on October 4, 2012 (77 FR 60750), and published a final listing on October 2, 2013 (78 FR 61003). At that time, we concluded that CH was prudent but not determinable. On June 21, 2018, we received a Notice to Intent to Sue from CBD. Under a resulting court-ordered settlement agreement, the proposed designation was due to the Federal Register by January 16, 2020. To include additional supporting information and clarifying language in the rule, the deadline was extended to May 15, 2020.

Photos and Range Maps

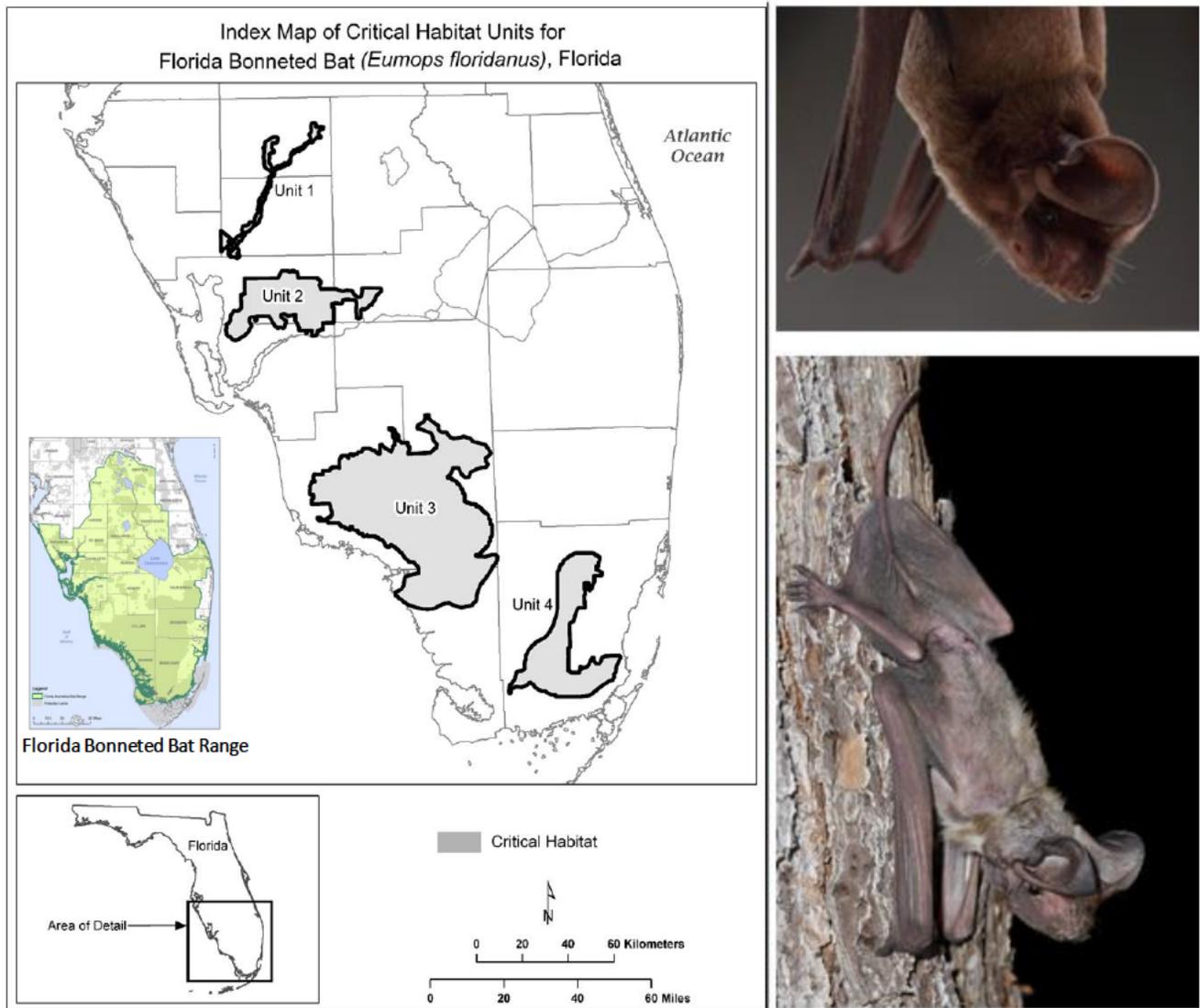


Figure 1. Florida Bonneted Bats with Range and Critical Habitat Unit maps

Photo credits: Zoo Miami (right top); Ralph Arwood (right bottom).

Key Drivers of Species Status

The species is threatened by a wide array of natural and anthropogenic factors, which pose significant risk to its continued survival. In particular, the loss and conversion of natural habitats, especially forested areas and wetlands, due to human population growth and associated development and agriculture are expected to further impact the species and curtail its limited range. The Florida bonneted bat's ability to inhabit human-made structures also places it at risk from inadvertent or purposeful harm by humans due to intolerance or lack of awareness. Effects of small population size, slow reproduction, low fecundity, and restricted range also contribute to the species' vulnerability. For an in-depth discussion of threats related to the Florida bonneted, see the Summary of Factors Affecting the Species section of our final listing rule (78 FR 61003).

Data Sources

Information used in the development of the proposed CH rule (i.e., habitat analyses and unit delineations) includes:

- (1) Confirmed presence data compiled in our GIS database from 2003 through 2019 (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission [FWC], University of Florida, and other various sources, including survey reports, databases, publications);
- (2) Vegetation cover types and land uses from the Florida Land Use and Cover Classification System (FLUCCS) GIS database;
- (3) Red-cockaded woodpecker data layers (mainly active and inactive cavity trees), based upon suggestions from FWC and evidence indicating that Florida bonneted bats use enlarged woodpecker cavities for roosting;
- (4) Areas searched for the ivory-billed woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) and other woodpeckers (i.e., areas that contained large cavity trees) as part of Cornell University's study;
- (5) ArcGIS online basemap aerial imagery (collected December, 2010) and Digital Orthophoto Quarter Quadrangles (1-m true color; collected 2004) of select areas to cross-check FLUCCS and ensure that the presence of physical and biological features remained intact; and
- (6) Florida Natural Areas Inventory Florida Managed Areas dataset, and the Institute for Regional Conservation's Natural Forest Community delineation, to identify high-quality habitat expected to have conservation value now and in the future.

Critical Habitat

We have determined that the following physical and biological features are essential to the conservation of the Florida bonneted bat:

(1) Representative forest types (all age classes) that support the Florida bonneted bat by providing roosting and foraging habitat within its core areas (i.e., Polk, Charlotte, Lee, Collier, Monroe, and Miami-Dade Counties), including:

- (a) Pine flatwoods;
- (b) Scrubby pine flatwoods;
- (c) Pine rocklands;
- (d) Royal palm hammocks;
- (e) Mixed or hardwood hammocks;
- (f) Cypress;
- (g) Mixed or hardwood wetlands;
- (h) Mangroves (mature and pristine);
- (i) Cabbage palms; and
- (j) Sand pine scrub.

(2) Habitat that provides for roosting and rearing of offspring; such habitat provides structural features for rest, digestion of food, social interaction, mating, rearing of young, protection from sunlight and adverse weather conditions, and cover to reduce predation risks for adults and

young, and includes forest and other areas with tall or mature trees and other natural areas with suitable structures; which are generally characterized by:

- (a) Tall or mature live or dead trees, tree snags, and trees with cavities, hollows, crevices, or loose bark, including, but not limited to, trees greater than 10 m (33 ft) in height, greater than 20 cm (8 in) dbh, with cavities greater than 5 m (16 ft) high off the ground;
- (b) High incidence of tall or mature live trees with various deformities (e.g., large cavities, hollows, broken tops, loose bark, and other evidence of decay);
- (c) Sufficient open space for Florida bonneted bats to fly; areas may include open or semi-open canopy, canopy gaps and edges, or above the canopy, which provide relatively uncluttered conditions; and/or
- (d) Rock crevices.

(3) Habitat that provides for foraging, which may vary widely across the Florida bonneted bat's range, in accordance with ecological conditions, season, and disturbance regimes that influence vegetation structure and prey species distributions. Foraging habitat may be separate and relatively far distances from roosting habitat. Foraging habitat consists of:

- (a) Sources for drinking water and prey, including open fresh water and permanent or seasonal freshwater wetlands, in natural or rural areas (non-urban areas);
- (b) Wetland and upland forests, open freshwater wetlands, and wetland and upland shrub (which provide a prey base and suitable foraging conditions (i.e., open habitat structure));
- (c) Natural or semi-natural habitat patches in urban or residential areas that contribute to prey base and provide suitable foraging conditions (i.e., open habitat structure); and/or
- (d) The presence and abundance of the bat's prey (i.e., large, flying insects), in sufficient quantity, availability, and diversity necessary for reproduction, development, growth, and survival.

(4) A dynamic disturbance regime (natural or artificial) (e.g., fire, hurricanes) that maintains and regenerates forested habitat, including plant communities, open habitat structure, and temporary gaps, which is conducive to promoting a continual supply of roosting sites, prey items, and suitable foraging conditions.

(5) Large patches (over 40,470 ha [100,000 ac]) of forest and associated natural or semi-natural habitat types that represent functional ecosystems with a reduced influence from humans (i.e., areas that shield the bat from human disturbance, habitat loss and degradation).

(6) Corridors, consisting of roosting and foraging habitat, that allow for population maintenance and expansion, dispersal, and connectivity among and between geographic areas for natural and adaptive movements, including those necessitated by climate change.

(7) A subtropical climate that provides tolerable conditions for the species, such that normal behavior, successful reproduction, and rearing of offspring are possible.

We are proposing to designate critical habitat units that we have determined, to be occupied at the time of listing based on the best available scientific and commercial information. Thus, the areas being proposed for designation contain one or more of the PBFs that are essential to the species and which may require special management considerations or protection.

We determined that a critical habitat designation limited to geographical areas occupied by the species is adequate to ensure the conservation of the species. The occupied areas identified for designation provide for the conservation of the Florida bonneted bat because they provide ecological diversity (i.e., representation), and duplication and distribution of populations across the range of the species (i.e., redundancy), allowing the species to withstand catastrophic events. Additionally, the areas are sufficiently large to allow for populations with adequate resiliency.

The proposed CH designation consists of four units with approximately 598,259 ha (1,478,333 ac) (Table 1; Figure 1). All proposed units were occupied at the time of listing. Land ownership within the entire proposed CH consists of Federal (54%), Tribal (2%), State (26%), County/local (2%), private and other (16%; category consists of private individuals, companies, associations, organizations [including nonprofit organizations]), and unidentified (<1%).

Unit and Ownership	Area (ha (ac))
Unit 1—Peace River and surrounding areas	
State	4,537 (11,212)
County	119 (295)
Local	13 (32)
Private and Other	14,087 (34,810)
Unidentified	793 (1,960)
Total	19,550 (48,310)
Unit 2—Babcock-Webb WMA, Babcock Ranch, and surrounding areas	
Federal	1 (3)
State	61,128 (151,050)
County	3,724 (9,203)
Local	8 (21)
Private and Other	32,001 (79,077)
Unidentified	642 (1,587)
Total	97,505 (240,941)
Unit 3—Big Cypress and surrounding areas	
Federal	250,733 (619,573)
Tribal	10,527 (26,012)
State	61,869 (152,882)
County	3,384 (8,362)
Local	173 (427)
Private and Other	38,227 (94,460)
Unidentified	1,920 (4,745)
Total	366,833 (906,462)

Unit and Ownership	Area (ha (ac))
Unit 4—Miami-Dade natural areas	
Federal	71,385 (176,395)
Tribal	326 (805)
State	26,159 (64,639)
County	4,210 (10,404)
Local	114 (281)
Private and Other	11,496 (28,408)
Unidentified	683 (1,688)
Total	114,372 (282,620)
TOTAL (UNITS 1-4)	598,261 (1,478,333)

Scientific Peer Review

We will seek peer review on our proposed critical habitat designation, including its analysis and application of the best available science.

Overlap of Existing Critical Habitat

All proposed units overlap to some extent with the ranges of other listed species or already designated CH for co-occurring. Proposed units fall within the ranges of 20 federally listed species. The highest degree of overlap with regard to CH for co-occurring species is within Unit 4. Species with overlapping CH include: Cape Sable seaside sparrow (*Ammodramus maritimus mirabilis*), American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*), West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), Everglade snail kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus*), Bartram’s scrub-hairstreak (*Strymon acis bartrami*), and Florida leafwing (*Anaea troglodyta floridaalis*).

Economic Analysis

We conducted an economic analysis of the impact of designating CH for the Florida bonneted bat. The estimated economic impact of the proposed designation would be less than \$239,000 per year. While the proposed critical habitat area is relatively large, the strong baseline protections that already exist for this species due to its listed status, the existence of a consultation area map that alerts managing agencies about the location of the species and its habitat, and the presence of other listed species in the area keep the costs comparatively low. The highest costs are expected in Unit 3, associated with anticipated future consultations within BCNP and ENP. However, based on recent changes to Service regulations, it is possible that some of these consultations, which may include reinitiations of land use plans, may not be required.

Overview of Lands being Considered for Exemption and Exclusion from the Final Designation

We have determined that conservation efforts identified in Avon Park Air Force Range’s (APAFR) approved integrated natural resources management plan (INRMP) will provide benefits to the Florida bonneted bat and the features essential to this species occurring on the base. Therefore, lands within APAFR are exempt from critical habitat designation under section

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Alyssa Hausman, alyssa_hausman@fws.gov, 703-358-2275

State: The SFESO will provide advanced notification to the governor and to the Director of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Other Outreach: We plan to host webinars for key stakeholders and interested parties.

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Conference line - 866-712-9351 Passcode 476832

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Elk River crayfish (FR00003967)	12-month finding	1	5/18/2020	6/2/2020	6/16/2020	6/30/2020	With DCC-BDL. SA to deliver to FR by 6/30/20.
longsolid, purple lilliput, and round hickorynut (FR00003954)	12-month finding and proposed listing and critical habitat	2	5/18/2020	6/2/2020	6/16/2020	6/30/2020	With the Region. SA to deliver to FR by 6/30/20.
slickspot peppergrass (FR00003962)	Revised Proposed Critical Habitat	9	5/18/2020	6/2/2020	6/16/2020	6/30/2020	With AES-DCC. SA to deliver to FR by 6/30/20.
dunes sagebrush lizard (FR00003670)	90-day finding	6	5/18/2020	6/2/2020	6/16/2020	6/30/2020	With DCC-BDL. SA to deliver to FR by 6/30/20.
Arctic grayling (FR00003967)	12-month finding	5	5/19/2020	6/3/2020	6/17/2020	7/1/2020	With DCC-BDL. SA to deliver to FR by 7/1/20.

Weekly Update
ES Action Tracking

Species	Action Type	DOI Unified Region	To Director	To ASFWP	To Exec Sec	To FR	Notes
Attention: Non-Court Driven Actions							
Texas hornshell (FR00003363)	Proposed Critical Habitat	6	(7/16/2019)	7/22/2019	8/5/2019	8/19/2019	With FWP. <i>Complaint received.</i>
Yangtze Sturgeon (FR00003523)	Final Listing	HQ	8/14/2019	9/2/2019	9/16/2019	9/30/2019	With Director.
Peppered chub (FR00003625)	Proposed Listing and Critical Habitat	6	9/24/2019	10/16/2019	10/30/2019	11/13/2019	With Director. <i>Complaint received .</i>
Candy darter (FR00003688)	Final Critical Habitat	1	(2/18/2020)	2/18/2020	11/21/2019	12/5/2019	With FWP. <i>Complaint received .</i>
Leatherback sea turtle (FR00003732)	12-month finding	HQ	11/1/2019	11/19/2019	12/3/2019	12/17/2019	With Director.
Island marble butterfly (FR00003820)	Final Listing and Critical Habitat	9	(11/7/2019)	(1/30/2020)	2/6/2020	12/20/2019	With Exec Sec. <i>Complaint received.</i>
Cumberland sandwort (FR00003857)	Proposed Delisting	4	(1/2/2020)	(1/19/2020)	1/24/2020	1/27/2020	With Exec Sec.
Sonoyta mud turtle (FR00003864)	Final Critical Habitat	7	(3/23/2020)	3/23/2020	2/11/2020	2/25/2020	With FWP.
Atlantic pigtoe (FR00003876)	Reopening of the Comment Period on the Proposed Listing, 4(d), and Critical Habitat	2	(3/2/2020)	3/2/2020	2/26/2020	3/11/2020	With FWP. <i>Complaint received.</i>
Borax Lake chub (FR00003917)	Final Delisting	9	(3/29/2020)	3/30/2020	4/26/2020	5/10/2020	With FWP

Weekly Update
ES Action Tracking

Species	Action Type	DOI Unified Region	To Director	To ASFWP	To Exec Sec	To FR	Notes
Neuse River waterdog and Carolina madtom (FR00003942)	Reopening of the Comment Period on the Proposed Listing, 4(d), and Critical Habitat	2	3/6/2020	3/27/2020	4/10/2020	4/24/2020	With AES-DCC to address Director comments.
Missouri DPS of the eastern hellbender (FR00003862)	Final Listing	3	3/6/2020	4/2/2020	4/16/2020	4/30/2020	With AES-DCC to address Director comments.
San Benito Evening Primrose (FR00003666)	Proposed Delisting	10	3/23/2020	4/6/2020	4/20/2020	5/4/2020	With Director.

Packages w FWS to address SPR ruling

Chapin Mesa milkvetch (FR00003313)	Proposed Listing and Critical Habitat	7	(12/8/2019)	(1/30/2020)	9/16/2019	9/30/2019	Cleared FWP and sent to Director for signature. With AES to address Director comments. Affected by SPR ruling. <i>NOI received</i> .
Eastern black rail (FR00003761)	Final Listing and 4(d)	2	(1/7/2020)	(1/13/2020)	2/7/2020	10/28/2019	Affected by SPR ruling. Complaint received.
Morro Shoulderband Snail (FR00003784)	Proposed Downlisting	10	(12/9/2019)	(1/30/2020)	2/6/2020	11/8/2019	Affected by SPR ruling. With Exec Sec.
Wright's marsh thistle (FR00003756)	Proposed Listing and Critical Habitat	6	(1/7/2020)	1/7/2020	11/4/2019	11/18/2019	With AES to address FWP comments. Affected by SPR ruling. <i>NOI received</i> .
Big Creek crayfish, St. Francis River crayfish (FR00003630)	Proposed Listing and Critical Habitat	3	10/16/2019	11/5/2019	11/19/2019	12/3/2019	With AES to address Director comments. Affected by SPR ruling.
Whitebark pine (FR00003801)	Proposed Listing and 4(d)	6	11/21/2019	12/11/2019	12/26/2019	1/10/2020	With AES to address Director comments. Affected by SPR ruling. <i>NOI received</i> .

Weekly Update
ES Action Tracking

Species	Action Type	DOI Unified Region	To Director	To ASFWP	To Exec Sec	To FR	Notes
Slenderclaw crayfish (FR00003888)	Final Listing, 4(d), and Critical Habitat	2	1/9/2020	1/30/2020	2/13/2020	2/27/2020	With AES to address Director comments. Affected by SPR ruling. <i>Complaint received</i> .
Beach layia (FR00003889)	Proposed Downlisting	10	1/13/2020	1/27/2020	2/10/2020	2/24/2020	With AES to address Director comments. Affected by SPR ruling.

Dates in **BOLD** are actual dates; in parentheses are surname dates

Completed!!!

Golden conure (FR00003570)	Final Downlisting	HQ	(10/26/2019)	(1/19/2020)	1/24/2020		Cleared 4/2/2020
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Outstanding Notices of Intent to Sue & Complaints on ESA S4 Deadlines

Date	Species	Action Noticed / Allegation	Sender/Plaintiff
Notices of Intent to Sue			
3/10/2020	Culebra skink, Mona skink, lesser Virgin Islands skink, Virgin Islands skink, Puerto Rican skink, Greater St. Croix skink, Greater Virgin Islands skink, lesser St. Croix skink	12M	Born Free USA, CBD, HSI, HSUS, NRDC
3/3/2020	Penasco least chipmunk, gopher tortoise, longfin smelt, Colorado delta clam, Texas pimpleback, Texas fawnsfoot, Texas fatmucket, magnificent ramshorn, rattlesnake-master borer moth, Wright's marsh thistle, Chapin mesa milkvetch, skiff milkvetch, bracted twistflower, whitebark pine	PL	CBD
1/31/2020	northern spotted owl	12M uplist/tax change; 5-year review	Environmental Protection Information Center, Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, Western Environmental Law Center, American Bird Conservancy, Cascadia Wildlands, Oregon Wild, Pilchuck Audubon Society, Northcoast Environmental Center, Safe Alternatives for our Forest Environment, Forest Issues Group, Lassen Forest Preservation Group, Sierra Foothills Audubon Society, and South Umpqua Rural Community Partnership
12/4/2019	Rio Grande chub, Rio Grande sucker, sturgeon chub, narrow-footed hygrotus diving beetle	12m	WEG
10/31/2019	coastal marten	FL	CBD, Environmental Protection Information Center
8/26/2019	23 Micronesian species	missed deadlines to designate CH	CBD
5/2/2017	relict dace	12M	Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics
11/16/2016	African elephant	12M uplist/tax change	CBD, et al.

Date	Species	Action Noticed / Allegation	Sender/Plaintiff
12/28/2015	39 foreign species (sturgeon, tarantulas, bats, Ridgway's hawk, Flores hawk-eagle)	12M	Friends of Animals
12/10/2015	pygmy 3-toed sloth	12M	Animal Welfare Institute
12/10/2014	Florida pine snake, Key ringneck snake, rim rocked crowned snake, short tailed snake, southern hognosed snake, Cedar Key mole skink, Carolina gopher frog, Florida scrub lizard	12M	CBD
10/7/2014	western pond turtle, southern rubber boa, western spadefoot, Inyo Mountains salamander, lesser slender salamander, relictual slender salamander, Kern Plateau salamander, Kern Canyon slender salamander, limestone salamander, Shasta salamander, Panamint alligator lizard	12M	CBD
10/7/2014	flat tailed tortoise, spider tortoise	12M	Friends of Animals
7/10/2014	rayed bean	CH	CESAR
1/16/2014	Rio Grande cooter, AZ toad, Yuman desert fringe toed lizard, Cascades cavern salamander	12M	CBD
3/14/2013	piebald madtom, saddled madtom, Coosa creekshell, Coosawattae crayfish, North FL spider cave crayfish	12M	CBD
1/29/2013	Eastern diamondback rattlesnake	12M	CBD
6/18/2012	GA blind salamander, Palatka skipper, Orlando cave crayfish, purple skimmer, white meadowbeauty, FL cave amphipod	12M	CBD

Complaints

3/19/2020	eastern black rail	FL	CBD, Healthy Gulf
3/18/2020	wolverine	FL	CBD, Conservation Northwest, Defenders, Friends of the Clearwater, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Idaho Conservation League, Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center, and Rocky Mountain Wild
2/27/2020	241 species	12m, CH, FL	CBD
2/20/2020	lake sturgeon	12m	CBD, Fishable Indiana Streams for Hoosiers, Hoosier Environmental Council, Prairie Rivers Network
1/22/2020	7 pangolin species: Chinese, giant ground, Indian, long-tailed (black-bellied), Philippine, Sunda, and tree (white-bellied)	12m	Born Free USA, CBD, HSI, HSUS, NRDC
1/21/2020	Pascagoula and Pearl River map turtles	12m	CBD, Healthy Gulf
1/8/2020	Green Sea Turtle DPS	CH	CBD, Turtle Island Restoration Network, Sea Turtle Oversight Protection

Date	Species	Action Noticed / Allegation	Sender/Plaintiff
10/1/2019	dunes sagebrush lizard	90d	CBD, Defenders
7/12/2019	Arizona eryngo	12M	CBD, Maricopa Audubon Society
Resolved			
3/20/2020	golden conure	FL	American Federation of Aviculture

Information Memorandum for the Secretary/Director

Date: March 30, 2020
From: Gary Frazer, Assistant Director, Ecological Services
Telephone #: 202-208-4646
Subject: Proposed Rule to Designate Critical Habitat for the Florida Bonneted Bat

I. Introduction

The Florida bonneted bat (*Eumops floridanus*) is a large, non-migratory, free-tailed bat, endemic to south Florida. We listed the species as endangered on October 2, 2013 (78 FR 61003). At that time, we concluded that critical habitat (CH) was prudent but not determinable due to lack of information on the physical and biological features essential for the species' conservation. Since that time, more research has helped us define the physical and biological features, and we have drafted a proposed designation using scientifically sound and defensible approaches. Under a court-ordered settlement agreement with the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD), we must send the proposed designation to the Federal Register by May 15, 2020. We are proposing to designate approximately 598,259 hectares (ha) (1,478,333 acres (ac)) in portions of 10 Florida counties as CH for the Florida bonneted bat.

II. Background

Previous Federal Actions

The Florida bonneted bat was first recognized as a candidate (category 2) for possible future listing on September 18, 1985 (50 CFR 37958), as the Florida mastiff bat (*Eumops glaucinus floridanus*). In 1991 (56 FR 58804), this bat was upgraded to a category 1 candidate; however, it was removed from the candidate list in 1996 (61 FR 7596), as the taxon was deemed more abundant or widespread than previously believed or not subject to any identifiable threat. In 2009, the Florida bonneted bat was recognized as a candidate species (i.e., listing was warranted but precluded by other higher priority listing actions) with a Listing Priority Number (LPN) of 2 (Candidate Notice of Review (74 FR 57804)), indicating that it is a high priority for the Service to determine appropriate action for this taxon.

In 2010, we received a petition from Wild South to list the bat. In 2011, the Service initiated a multi-year listing work plan as part of a settlement agreement with WildEarth Guardians and CBD. As part of the work plan, we proposed to list the Florida bonneted bat as endangered on October 4, 2012 (77 FR 60750), and published a final listing on October 2, 2013 (78 FR 61003). At that time, we concluded that CH was prudent but not determinable. On June 21, 2018, we received a Notice to Intent to Sue from CBD. Under a resulting court-ordered settlement agreement, the proposed designation was due to the Federal Register by January 16, 2020. To include additional supporting information and clarifying language in the rule, the deadline was extended to May 15, 2020.

Photos and Range Maps

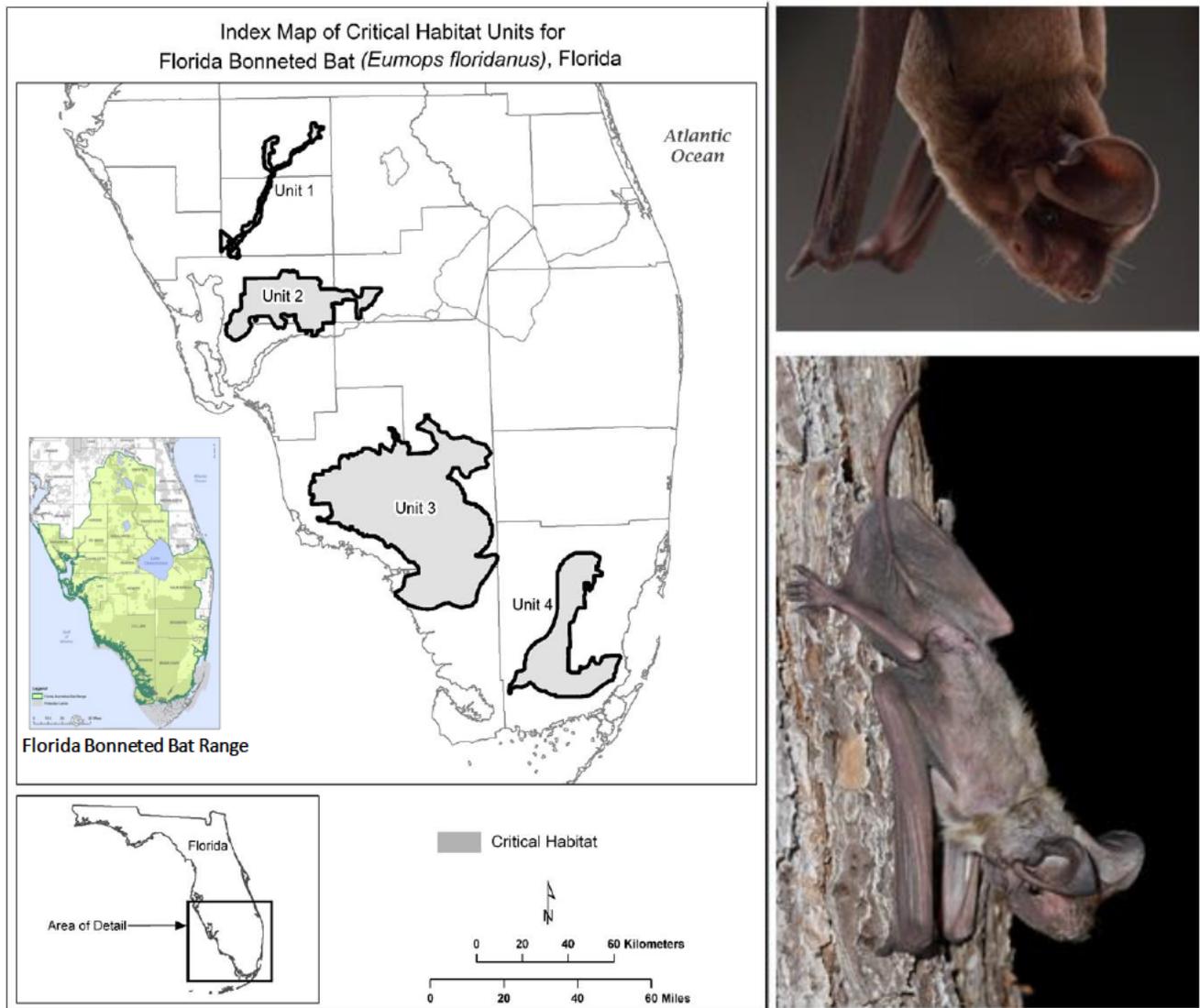


Figure 1. Florida Bonneted Bats with Range and Critical Habitat Unit maps

Photo credits: Zoo Miami (right top); Ralph Arwood (right bottom).

Key Drivers of Species Status

The species is threatened by a wide array of natural and anthropogenic factors, which pose significant risk to its continued survival. In particular, the loss and conversion of natural habitats, especially forested areas and wetlands, due to human population growth and associated development and agriculture are expected to further impact the species and curtail its limited range. The Florida bonneted bat's ability to inhabit human-made structures also places it at risk from inadvertent or purposeful harm by humans due to intolerance or lack of awareness. Effects of small population size, slow reproduction, low fecundity, and restricted range also contribute to the species' vulnerability. For an in-depth discussion of threats related to the Florida bonneted, see the Summary of Factors Affecting the Species section of our final listing rule (78 FR 61003).

Data Sources

Information used in the development of the proposed CH rule (i.e., habitat analyses and unit delineations) includes:

- (1) Confirmed presence data compiled in our GIS database from 2003 through 2019 (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission [FWC], University of Florida, and other various sources, including survey reports, databases, publications);
- (2) Vegetation cover types and land uses from the Florida Land Use and Cover Classification System (FLUCCS) GIS database;
- (3) Red-cockaded woodpecker data layers (mainly active and inactive cavity trees), based upon suggestions from FWC and evidence indicating that Florida bonneted bats use enlarged woodpecker cavities for roosting;
- (4) Areas searched for the ivory-billed woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*) and other woodpeckers (i.e., areas that contained large cavity trees) as part of Cornell University's study;
- (5) ArcGIS online basemap aerial imagery (collected December, 2010) and Digital Orthophoto Quarter Quadrangles (1-m true color; collected 2004) of select areas to cross-check FLUCCS and ensure that the presence of physical and biological features remained intact; and
- (6) Florida Natural Areas Inventory Florida Managed Areas dataset, and the Institute for Regional Conservation's Natural Forest Community delineation, to identify high-quality habitat expected to have conservation value now and in the future.

Critical Habitat

We have determined that the following physical and biological features are essential to the conservation of the Florida bonneted bat:

(1) Representative forest types (all age classes) that support the Florida bonneted bat by providing roosting and foraging habitat within its core areas (i.e., Polk, Charlotte, Lee, Collier, Monroe, and Miami-Dade Counties), including:

- (a) Pine flatwoods;
- (b) Scrubby pine flatwoods;
- (c) Pine rocklands;
- (d) Royal palm hammocks;
- (e) Mixed or hardwood hammocks;
- (f) Cypress;
- (g) Mixed or hardwood wetlands;
- (h) Mangroves (mature and pristine);
- (i) Cabbage palms; and
- (j) Sand pine scrub.

(2) Habitat that provides for roosting and rearing of offspring; such habitat provides structural features for rest, digestion of food, social interaction, mating, rearing of young, protection from sunlight and adverse weather conditions, and cover to reduce predation risks for adults and

young, and includes forest and other areas with tall or mature trees and other natural areas with suitable structures; which are generally characterized by:

- (a) Tall or mature live or dead trees, tree snags, and trees with cavities, hollows, crevices, or loose bark, including, but not limited to, trees greater than 10 m (33 ft) in height, greater than 20 cm (8 in) dbh, with cavities greater than 5 m (16 ft) high off the ground;
- (b) High incidence of tall or mature live trees with various deformities (e.g., large cavities, hollows, broken tops, loose bark, and other evidence of decay);
- (c) Sufficient open space for Florida bonneted bats to fly; areas may include open or semi-open canopy, canopy gaps and edges, or above the canopy, which provide relatively uncluttered conditions; and/or
- (d) Rock crevices.

(3) Habitat that provides for foraging, which may vary widely across the Florida bonneted bat's range, in accordance with ecological conditions, season, and disturbance regimes that influence vegetation structure and prey species distributions. Foraging habitat may be separate and relatively far distances from roosting habitat. Foraging habitat consists of:

- (a) Sources for drinking water and prey, including open fresh water and permanent or seasonal freshwater wetlands, in natural or rural areas (non-urban areas);
- (b) Wetland and upland forests, open freshwater wetlands, and wetland and upland shrub (which provide a prey base and suitable foraging conditions (i.e., open habitat structure));
- (c) Natural or semi-natural habitat patches in urban or residential areas that contribute to prey base and provide suitable foraging conditions (i.e., open habitat structure); and/or
- (d) The presence and abundance of the bat's prey (i.e., large, flying insects), in sufficient quantity, availability, and diversity necessary for reproduction, development, growth, and survival.

(4) A dynamic disturbance regime (natural or artificial) (e.g., fire, hurricanes) that maintains and regenerates forested habitat, including plant communities, open habitat structure, and temporary gaps, which is conducive to promoting a continual supply of roosting sites, prey items, and suitable foraging conditions.

(5) Large patches (over 40,470 ha [100,000 ac]) of forest and associated natural or semi-natural habitat types that represent functional ecosystems with a reduced influence from humans (i.e., areas that shield the bat from human disturbance, habitat loss and degradation).

(6) Corridors, consisting of roosting and foraging habitat, that allow for population maintenance and expansion, dispersal, and connectivity among and between geographic areas for natural and adaptive movements, including those necessitated by climate change.

(7) A subtropical climate that provides tolerable conditions for the species, such that normal behavior, successful reproduction, and rearing of offspring are possible.

We are proposing to designate critical habitat units that we have determined, to be occupied at the time of listing based on the best available scientific and commercial information. Thus, the areas being proposed for designation contain one or more of the PBFs that are essential to the species and which may require special management considerations or protection.

We determined that a critical habitat designation limited to geographical areas occupied by the species is adequate to ensure the conservation of the species. The occupied areas identified for designation provide for the conservation of the Florida bonneted bat because they provide ecological diversity (i.e., representation), and duplication and distribution of populations across the range of the species (i.e., redundancy), allowing the species to withstand catastrophic events. Additionally, the areas are sufficiently large to allow for populations with adequate resiliency.

The proposed CH designation consists of four units with approximately 598,259 ha (1,478,333 ac) (Table 1; Figure 1). All proposed units were occupied at the time of listing. Land ownership within the entire proposed CH consists of Federal (54%), Tribal (2%), State (26%), County/local (2%), private and other (16%; category consists of private individuals, companies, associations, organizations [including nonprofit organizations]), and unidentified (<1%).

Unit and Ownership	Area (ha (ac))
Unit 1—Peace River and surrounding areas	
State	4,537 (11,212)
County	119 (295)
Local	13 (32)
Private and Other	14,087 (34,810)
Unidentified	793 (1,960)
Total	19,550 (48,310)
Unit 2—Babcock-Webb WMA, Babcock Ranch, and surrounding areas	
Federal	1 (3)
State	61,128 (151,050)
County	3,724 (9,203)
Local	8 (21)
Private and Other	32,001 (79,077)
Unidentified	642 (1,587)
Total	97,505 (240,941)
Unit 3—Big Cypress and surrounding areas	
Federal	250,733 (619,573)
Tribal	10,527 (26,012)
State	61,869 (152,882)
County	3,384 (8,362)
Local	173 (427)
Private and Other	38,227 (94,460)
Unidentified	1,920 (4,745)
Total	366,833 (906,462)

Unit and Ownership	Area (ha (ac))
Unit 4—Miami-Dade natural areas	
Federal	71,385 (176,395)
Tribal	326 (805)
State	26,159 (64,639)
County	4,210 (10,404)
Local	114 (281)
Private and Other	11,496 (28,408)
Unidentified	683 (1,688)
Total	114,372 (282,620)
TOTAL (UNITS 1-4)	598,261 (1,478,333)

Scientific Peer Review

We will seek peer review on our proposed critical habitat designation, including its analysis and application of the best available science.

Overlap of Existing Critical Habitat

All proposed units overlap to some extent with the ranges of other listed species or already designated CH for co-occurring. Proposed units fall within the ranges of 20 federally listed species. The highest degree of overlap with regard to CH for co-occurring species is within Unit 4. Species with overlapping CH include: Cape Sable seaside sparrow (*Ammodramus maritimus mirabilis*), American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*), West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), Everglade snail kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus*), Bartram’s scrub-hairstreak (*Strymon acis bartrami*), and Florida leafwing (*Anaea troglodyta floridaalis*).

Economic Analysis

We conducted an economic analysis of the impact of designating CH for the Florida bonneted bat. The estimated economic impact of the proposed designation would be less than \$239,000 per year. While the proposed critical habitat area is relatively large, the strong baseline protections that already exist for this species due to its listed status, the existence of a consultation area map that alerts managing agencies about the location of the species and its habitat, and the presence of other listed species in the area keep the costs comparatively low. The highest costs are expected in Unit 3, associated with anticipated future consultations within BCNP and ENP. However, based on recent changes to Service regulations, it is possible that some of these consultations, which may include reinitiations of land use plans, may not be required.

Overview of Lands being Considered for Exemption and Exclusion from the Final Designation

We have determined that conservation efforts identified in Avon Park Air Force Range’s (APAFR) approved integrated natural resources management plan (INRMP) will provide benefits to the Florida bonneted bat and the features essential to this species occurring on the base. Therefore, lands within APAFR are exempt from critical habitat designation under section

Elsie Davis, elsie_davis@fws.gov, 404-679-7107

Congressional: Kristen Peters, kristen_peters@fws.gov, 404-679-7172

Alyssa Hausman, alyssa_hausman@fws.gov, 703-358-2275

State: The SFESO will provide advanced notification to the governor and to the Director of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Other Outreach: We plan to host webinars for key stakeholders and interested parties.

From: aurelia_skipwith@fws.gov
To: aurelia_skipwith@fws.gov
Subject: AutoStore - See Attached Document
Date: Sunday, April 12, 2020 2:05:42 PM
Attachments: [Scan.pdf](#)

Please see attached document.

Powered by Nuance AutoStore.



USFWS INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 3, 2020

TO: Aurelia Skipwith, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FROM: Leopoldo Miranda, Regional Director, South Atlantic-Gulf and Mississippi Basin Regions

SUBJECT: Status of Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area (EHW NWR&CA) efforts within the Greater Everglades System

I. STATEMENT OF ISSUE/KEY FACTS

The purpose of this memorandum is to discuss the status of EHW NWR&CA land acquisition and management efforts in support of the Everglades Restoration and the Greater Everglades System

II. BACKGROUND AND FWS POSITION

EHW NWR&CA plays key roles in providing public access for hunting and fishing and in greater Everglades restoration efforts. Working with our partners we provide land protection and on-the-ground management that contributes to restoring the greater Everglades landscape. Key roles and attributes are identified and discussed in an effort to provide the latest information about our collective efforts to save one of the World's great landscapes.

EHW NWR&CA was established in January 2012 when the Service accepted a 10-acre donation from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) near Florida's Lake Hatchineha. This partnership approach to conservation has shown great early success and is supported by a wide array of stakeholders. To date, the Service has utilized (\$20.8M) allocated funding through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to acquire 8,981 acres of fee-title lands and conservation easements. Working together with our partners, the Service has protected a broad assemblage of habitats and wildlife and is a valuable contributor to a partnership network of conservation lands and working rural landscapes that compliment and connect to Everglades restoration efforts, specifically:

- Providing multiple outdoor recreational opportunities, including hunting and fishing, across Refuge fee-title lands.
- Protecting habitat including oak woodlands, pine flatwoods, dry prairie, and native wetlands that provide refugia and serve to connect landscapes for a wide array of species including Florida panther, Florida black bear, crested caracara, and Florida grasshopper sparrow.

From: [Cooke, Maureen P](#)
To: [Guertin, Stephen](#); [Arroyo, Bryan](#)
Cc: [Gale, Michael](#); [Morris, Charisa](#); [Sellars, Roslyn](#); [Skipwith, Aurelia](#); [Dove, William](#)
Subject: RE: URGENT Approval Requested: 4pm today with FWP: IMs for DOI Everglades Call Today
Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 8:55:49 AM
Attachments: [image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[Everglades Restoration.docx](#)
[Everglades Headwaters NWR Update.docx](#)
[FGSP status update.docx](#)

Steve and Bryan

Please disregard. Aurelia has approved the attached briefing material.

Respectfully,
Maureen P Cooke
Executive Assistant | Office of the Director
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
maureen_cooke@fws.gov | 202.208.4545



From: Cooke, Maureen P
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 10:41 AM
To: Guertin, Stephen <Stephen_Guertin@fws.gov>; Arroyo, Bryan <bryan_arroyo@fws.gov>
Cc: Gale, Michael <michael_gale@fws.gov>; Morris, Charisa <charisa_morris@fws.gov>; Roslyn Sellars <roslyn_sellars@fws.gov>; Skipwith, Aurelia <aurelia_skipwith@fws.gov>; Dove, William <William_Dove@fws.gov>
Subject: URGENT Approval Requested: 4pm today with FWP: IMs for DOI Everglades Call Today

Good morning Steve and Bryan,

Aurelia has a 4pm Everglades call with FWP today. Can either of you please review and approve the 3 attached briefing papers for the 4pm Everglades call?

Respectfully,
Maureen P Cooke
Executive Assistant | Office of the Director
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
maureen_cooke@fws.gov | 202.208.4545



From: Reese, Acquanetta <acquanetta_reese@fws.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 9:56 AM

To: Cooke, Maureen P <maureen_cooke@fws.gov>

Cc: Sellars, Roslyn <Roslyn_Sellars@fws.gov>

Subject: IMs for DOI Everglades Call Today

Hey Maureen.....as we discussed, here are three IMs in preparation for the call this afternoon.....also, Leo wanted mention to the Director's Office that he has reached out to the other SES'ers on what the topic is for the call and at this time, no one knows the reason or topic. He will continue to check on that. Let me know if you need anything else.

Acquanetta



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TO: Aurelia Skipwith, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FROM: Leopoldo Miranda, Regional Director, South Atlantic-Gulf and Mississippi Basin Regions

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II. BACKGROUND AND FWS POSITION

EHW NWR&CA plays key roles in providing public access for hunting and fishing and in greater Everglades restoration efforts. Working with our partners we provide land protection and on-the-ground management that contributes to restoring the greater Everglades landscape. Key roles and attributes are identified and discussed in an effort to provide the latest information about our collective efforts to save one of the World's great landscapes.

EHW NWR&CA was established in January 2012 when the Service accepted a 10-acre donation from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) near Florida's Lake Hatchineha. This partnership approach to conservation has shown great early success and is supported by a wide array of stakeholders. To date, the Service has utilized (\$20.8M) allocated funding through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to acquire 8,981 acres of fee-title lands and conservation easements. Working together with our partners, the Service has protected a broad assemblage of habitats and wildlife and is a valuable contributor to a partnership network of conservation lands and working rural landscapes that compliment and connect to Everglades restoration efforts, specifically:

- Providing multiple outdoor recreational opportunities, including hunting and fishing, across Refuge fee-title lands.
- Protecting habitat including oak woodlands, pine flatwoods, dry prairie, and native wetlands that provide refugia and serve to connect landscapes for a wide array of species including Florida panther, Florida black bear, crested caracara, and Florida grasshopper sparrow.

DELIBERATIVE-DRAFT-DO NOT DISCLOSE



USFWS INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 3, 2020, 2020

TO: Aurelia Skipwith, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FROM: Leopoldo Miranda, Regional Director, South Atlantic – Gulf and Mississippi Basin Regions

SUBJECT: Status of Endangered Florida Grasshopper Sparrow Recovery Efforts

I. STATEMENT OF ISSUE/KEY FACTS

The endangered Florida grasshopper sparrow (FGSP) is found only in the dry prairies of south-central Florida. In response to critically low numbers of FGSPs detected with annual breeding bird surveys, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), in partnership with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and the FGSP Working Group implemented several recovery initiatives, including captive propagation, to prevent the extinction and reverse the decline in the wild.

II. BACKGROUND AND FWS POSITION

FGSP populations have been in sharp decline despite intensive management and research efforts. Habitat loss, alteration of hydrology and fire regimes, and possibly disease, have played a role in the decline. To date, conservation partners have employed a multi-pronged approach to address the declines. Partners have conducted land management to restore and maintain suitable habitat. Research projects have provided guidance on habitat management and insight into life history stages. Based on the results of this research, partners have instituted recovery actions (*e.g.*, predator fencing, nest lifting to avoid flooding, red-imported fire ant treatments) that have substantially improved nest success, though they do not provide long-term solutions. In 2015, the Service initiated a captive-breeding program to augment the wild population via release of captive-reared birds. Breeding pairs are currently held at White Oak Conservation Foundation and Brevard Zoo, with additional unpaired birds held at Santa Fe College Teaching Zoo and Welaka National Fish Hatchery (WNFH).

Since captive propagation started five years ago, the Service has developed proven captive propagation and husbandry protocols that led to our most successful reproductive year in 2019. With the success of the captive propagation effort, the Service released captive-reared birds onto their native prairie for the first time in 2019; this effort is likely to produce substantial conservation benefits for the subspecies. Looking into the future, reversing FGSP declines will require continued investment in land management and nest protection, captive rearing to augment the wild population, and research to identify solutions in the wild that eliminate the need for continued captive rearing.

III. POSITION OF AFFECTED PARTIES/PUBLIC LANDS AFFECTED

At present, the range of the FGSP is generally restricted to three management units under public ownership – Avon Park Air Force Range (APAFR), Kissimmee Prairie Preserve State Park, Three Lakes Wildlife Management Area (TLWMA) – and at least three private ranches. The private lands occupied by FGSP occur within the Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area boundary, though none have yet become part of the Refuge. Through a Cooperative Recovery Initiative (CRI) grant the Service began monitoring FGSPs, and later protecting FGSP nests on one private ranch occupied by FGSPs in 2014. Though that grant ended in 2018, the Service maintains a strong partnership with the private landowner and continues to monitor the FGSP population through this partnership. The public land managers all participate in the FGSP recovery effort and all parties support the ongoing efforts to recover this species.

IV. STATUS UPDATE

In 2019, the Service and the FWC, with input from our partners in the FGSP Working Group, drafted and implemented a 5-year Strategic Vision (Vision) for the management of the FGSP. The vision is a recovery implementation strategy for components of the species-specific recovery actions from the FGSP Recovery Plan (Service 1999). The Vision provides a clear goal, objectives, and success criteria, along with an integrated set of actions designed to achieve them. Estimates of the resources required for full implementation are included. The Vision is time-bound, and success criteria are intended to provide agencies and partners the information they need to assess the degree to which continued investment is warranted in each facet of FGSP conservation efforts.

The stated goal of the Vision is to stabilize and grow the wild population over the next five years through habitat management, wild population management, and captive rearing and release, while identifying management actions that can reverse the population decline and reduce and eventually eliminate the need for future captive rearing.

As a result of these conservation actions, the Service has documented an increase in the number of FGSPs detected at all sites where they are currently monitored in 2019 (Figure 1). Also in 2019, the Service began releasing captive-reared FGSP back to their native prairies at TLWMA, which supports the largest known number of breeding FGSPs. A total of 105 birds were released from an on-site aviary constructed on State lands using a combination of Service and Department of Defense (DoD) funds. A subset of those birds were tracked with radio transmitters, and though the tracker batteries have a lifespan of only a couple of weeks, several birds were resighted up to six weeks after release. Success of these releases will be evaluated through recruitment into the wild population. Surveys of the wild population will begin in March 2020 and will quantify the recruitment.

Due to the success of our captive breeding program and to address the need for additional capacity, we partnered with WNFH in 2019. They are currently holding FGSPs that will either be released in 2020 or incorporated into the captive breeding program. Using funds from a State of the Birds grant, WNFH plans to build a second aviary to house FGSPs in 2020. Their

From: tasha_l_robbins@ios.doi.gov on behalf of [Wallace, George R](#)
To: [Tanner, John R](#); [Bettencourt, Aubrey J](#); [Ramos, Pedro](#); [Miranda, Leopoldo](#); [Vogel, Bob](#); [Gelber, Adam R](#); [Budd-Falen, Karen J](#); [Everson, OS-Margaret](#)
Cc: [Vela, Raymond \(David\)](#); [Skipwith, Aurelia](#); [Sellars, Roslyn](#); [Fox, Kelly](#); [Cooke, Maureen P](#); [Hopson, Sarah](#); [Hambleton, Ryan M](#); [Mills, Katie E](#)
Subject: Everglades Call
Attachments: [Everglades Headwaters NWR Update.docx](#)
[Everglades Restoration \(1\).docx](#)
[FGSP status update.docx](#)



USFWS INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 3, 2020

TO: Aurelia Skipwith, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

FROM: Leopoldo Miranda, Regional Director, South Atlantic-Gulf and Mississippi Basin Regions

SUBJECT: Status of Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area (EHW NWR&CA) efforts within the Greater Everglades System

I. STATEMENT OF ISSUE/KEY FACTS

The purpose of this memorandum is to discuss the status of EHW NWR&CA land acquisition and management efforts in support of the Everglades Restoration and the Greater Everglades System

II. BACKGROUND AND FWS POSITION

EHW NWR&CA plays key roles in providing public access for hunting and fishing and in greater Everglades restoration efforts. Working with our partners we provide land protection and on-the-ground management that contributes to restoring the greater Everglades landscape. Key roles and attributes are identified and discussed in an effort to provide the latest information about our collective efforts to save one of the World's great landscapes.

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